

FACULTY OF MUSIC UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Symphony Orchestra

MICHEL TABACHNIK,
CONDUCTOR

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 1990

8:00 PM

MACMILLAN THEATRE

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PROGRAM

Overture to Romeo and Juliet

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840 - 1893)

Horn Concerto No. 1

Richard Strauss
(1864 - 1949)

Katherine Robertson, french horn

Intermission

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faun

Claude Achille Debussy
(1862 - 1918)

Piano Concerto in G Major

Maurice Ravel
(1875 - 1937)

- I. Allegramente
- II. Adagio assai
- III. Presto

John Alonso, piano

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Steinway piano from Remenyi House of Music.

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This evening's performance is being recorded by CJRT-FM for future broadcast.

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TONIGHT'S ARTISTS

JOHN ALONSO is in his fourth year of the Bachelor of Music in Performance program. He is a student of Boris Lysenko.

KATHERINE ROBERTSON studies with Eugene Rittich, and is in her fourth year of the Bachelor of Music in Performance program.

One of Europe's most talented conductors, **MICHEL TABACHNIK** concluded his studies in piano, conducting and composition at the Conservatoire in his home town of Geneva, and embarked upon a conducting career which quickly brought notice and invitations from such prominent masters as Igor Markevitch, Pierre Boulez and Herbert von Karajan.

Acclaimed in Toronto for his work with the Canadian Opera Company, Maestro Tabachnik has also conducted productions at the Deutsche Oper, Rome Opera and at festivals in Paris, London, Prague, Athens, Zurich, Marseille and Rome. He has led such distinguished orchestras as the Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Paris National Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.

During recent months, Michel Tabachnik has conducted major orchestras in Paris, Lisbon, Lugano, Madrid, Bern, Rome, and Tokyo. He toured Italy with the Sicilian Regional Orchestra, then returned to France to direct the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra. In addition to conducting the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Maestro Tabachnik is Artistic Director of l'Orchestre des Jeunes du Quebec.

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NOTES

Overture to Romeo and Juliet

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

It was Balakirev, the composer/leader of the Russian nationalist "mighty five" who persuaded Tchaikovsky to write a programmatic work after Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Despite their very different approaches to composition, Balakirev was important in shaping the work, for when Tchaikovsky found himself unable to make any progress, Balakirev wrote explaining how he composed after a literary work, and even included the four bars of music that he would have started with; later, on seeing the score, he made several suggestions including the addition of a Lisztian chorale. Tchaikovsky revised the work (something he rarely did) producing two further versions with the introduction as we know it, featuring a solemn, hymn-like tune. The overture is in sonata form,

with the introduction and an epilogue. The first theme group, based on short rhythmic motives, is said to represent the street fighting and hostility, contrasting with the famous love theme. In the combination of themes in the coda, Tchaikovsky attempts to capture the events of the story.

Horn Concerto No. 1

Richard Strauss

The horn was a favourite instrument of Strauss, and though he did not play it himself, his father Franz was the principal horn player in the Munich court orchestra. Richard's first compositions for horn were two études written when he was only nine years old. The best known of his subsequent efforts are the two concertos, written more than fifty years apart.

This concerto, the earlier, was premiered in 1885. It is a highly crafted work, reflecting a classical approach which evokes something of both Mendelssohn and Mozart. The three movements are played without a break, and are linked by recurring motives and themes. For example, the opening horn fanfare returns, both rhythmically varied as the theme of the final rondo, and in one of the episodes of the same movement, in its original guise. The use of themes that outline triads is a further unifying element. The slow movement shows an interest in combining the solo horn with various orchestral colours.

Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faun

Claude Achille Debussy

Like the Tchaikovsky overture, this work is related to a literary text, in this case the poem "L'après midi d'un faun" by Stéphane Mallarmé. However, the prelude does not follow the action or narrative of the poem, in which a faun tries to remember a dreamlike encounter which he had (or dreamed he had) with two nymphs. Instead, Debussy created a world of sound which suggests the general tone of the poem. Mallarmé was pleased with the result, for he felt the music "set up no dissonance with my text, except indeed to explore further the nostalgia and the atmosphere of light, delicately, disturbingly, deeply". The one specific reference to the poem is the faun's flute, which is prominent in the orchestral texture. The theme, first in the flutes and unaccompanied, and then elaborated and reorchestrated, is at once both lyrical and ambiguous. After a more animated middle section the first theme returns, with thematic repetition enhancing the atmosphere of reverie.

Piano Concerto in G Major

Maurice Ravel

Ravel wrote at times in a style similar to Debussy, whom he admired, which has been called "impressionism". This, and several coincidences, such as the production of both a ballet version of the *Prélude à l'après midi d'un faun* and Ravel's ballet *Daphnis et Chloé* in 1912 by the Ballets Russes, led to the judgement that Ravel was "more Debussyiste than Debussy", which unfortunately has stuck. This late work shows many of Ravel's non-Debussyiste traits. Spanish and Basque melody types and rhythms, syncopation and blue notes of American blues and jazz are found, especially in the first movement. The rhythmic vitality is particularly characteristic of Ravel.

At the same time, Ravel was also working on the *Concerto for the Left Hand*. The piano concerto was a new genre for him, and he was able to explore traditional elements within his own musical style. The adagio, which opens with the piano exposition of a beautifully drawn out theme, then pits the soloist's ostinato and figuration on

the theme against combinations of winds, familiar from Mozart's concertos. The opening, in a modified version of traditional first-movement form, has the expected piano cadenza, but preceded by a harp cadenza, and a cadenza-like passage for the winds imitating the harp.

*--Notes by Jennifer Griesbach
History and Literature, Year 3*

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COACHES

Eugene Rittich, Adjunct Professor (winds)
David Zafer, Professor (strings)

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STUDENT CONDUCTORS

Ivan Alexander
Peter Bergamin
Jeff McCune
Rosemary Thomson

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Violin

Christopher Bancej
Jeremy Bell✱
Krista Buckland✓
Nancy Case
Vivian Chon
Debbie Diamond
Sophie Drouin
Jared Erhardt✱
Melissa Exmundo
Mariola Frackowiak
Corey Gemmell
Karen Graves
Jackson Huang
Anna Kolesar
Xiao Liao✱
Lenore McIntyre
Diane Nam
Stevan Pepa
Gabriel Pliego
Konstantin Popovic
Shana Sandler
Michelle Speller
Malou Sobrevinas
Claudia Stecker
Janetta Wilczewska
Samuel Yeung

Viola

Catherine Hoy
Bridget Lamarche
Donald Lyons
Ananya Menon
Nicholaos Papadakis✱
Rachel Sells

Cello

Jeremy Findlay
Irina Grunberg
Gregory Hubert●
Julianna Kim
Darach McGee▼
Seung Yeon Song
Margaret Tobola

Bass

Robert Clutton
James Creeggan
Brian Joyce✱
Patrick MacPhail
Gregory Sheldon
Rob Sidorchuk
Stephan Valentyne

Flute

Chenoa Anderson
Sonja-Maria Boon
Patricia Clarke
Lesley Duff
Martina Kurth
Louis Papachristos
Marlene Pires
Todd Skitch
Troy Whynot

Oboe

Caroll Kim
Heidi Postl
Pippa Williams

Clarinet

Lorraine Adams
Arthur Luck
Sharon Pearson
Janine Short
Mark Thompson

Bassoon

Christine Cardinal
Slawomir Krysmalski
Catherine MacDonnell
Aleksandar Popovic

Horn

Heath Allen
Elke Eble
Sharon Fisher
Darcy McFadyen
Katherine Robertson
Lawrence Vine
Julia Yang

Trumpet

Timothy Birtch
Curtis Deitz
Paul Kemerer

Trombone

Emily Harris
Donald Rayment
Robert Tilley

Tuba

Robert Brown

Percussion

Alan Hetherington
Andrew Morris
Gabor Taryan
Steven Wassmansdorf

Harp

Agnes Lee
Leslie McInnis

- ✓ Concertmaster: Tchaikovsky
- ✕ Concertmaster: Strauss
- ✱ Concertmaster: Debussy
- ✱ Concertmaster: Ravel
- ⊗ Principal
- Principal: Tchaikovsky, Strauss
- ▼ Principal: Debussy, Ravel

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1989/90 PRODUCTION STAFF

Carl Morey, Dean
Ron Chandler, Associate Dean (on leave 1989/90)
Stephen Chenette, Acting Associate Dean
Marnie Hare, Performance Division
Fred Perruzza, Technical Director, MacMillan Theatre
Jim Earls & Scott Thom, Technical Assistants, MacMillan Theatre
Brian Joyce, UTSO Manager
Joanne Harada, Public Relations Officer
Ronda Rindone-Baird, Public Relations Assistant

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